Elden Ring DLC Memos A2

Filename: 2024-06-18 22-56-11 (Mausoleum - extra)

Memo 1: 13/07/25 A2

0:00 This actually isn't part of the recording, but I thought I'd observe that I retained all of my recording files – even the sound checks. This file is just a minute or so long and lets me test the audio, I try things like breaking a pot to see if I can hear myself over sound effects and stuff. In theory I could've deleted this, or not copied it over, or not watched it not, or not written this note! But recording extras from the process feels nice. There's a sense of completeness about it. And I find it hard to get rid of recordings, even trivial ones, in case they're useful in the future. Digital hoarding I guess.

Memo 2: 31/08/25 A1

I haven't watched this recording but I wanted to put a note here that I have saved footage of us doing a co-op fight, and one of me doing a survey in the Shadow Keep (Specimen Storage) where Messmer the Impaler is, but we decided not to include these surveys. I'm not sure what we will do with this extra data, if at all, especially as they are one-offs.

Filename: 2024-06-18 23-01-12 (Mausoleum)

Memo 1: 13/07/25 A2

0:28 I can hear myself clacking the controller. I used to only play games with mouse and keyboard but over the last five years I use the controller more and more because of RSI. One thing I notice is that the camera control is really swingy. When you're playing, you're zoned in on the camera movement, and so you don't notice it moving 'fast' because you're anticipating the movement through your own muscle input. But watching it back is like watching someone else play – if they move the camera normally for them it feels quite rapid. Sort of like shakycam footage shot on a handheld I guess.
00:48 I say I'm going to see a message "first" I think I must have spotted it out of the corner of my eye while doing the intro. Rewinding, I think I spot it at 00:42?
00:55 Haha I don't know if I smashed that pot accidentally or just because it was fun. It feels accidental but I think I would've commented on it if it was.
01:00 I laugh at this message, I like that I can hear that. I also then give an explanation of the mechanics. I remember doing this in a few places, not just now but in similar projects in the past as well. I transcribed some DOTA 2 commentaries and added a lot of transcription notes explaining mechanics so people who don't know DOTA 2 (which is very complex) could understand it later. Not just people who don't know it, to be honest, even if the meta has changed. I also added mechanical explanations in Wurm too. So I like that I remembered to do this here, although I suspect I do it less as the days of recording go on.
1:45 I'm walking more slowly now while I talk about letting the messages load in, I think I might have been a bit suspicious they hadn't loaded fully. But I'm also saying I waited a bit to

give it some time, I remember doing a specific thing at the start of each Mausoleum run and when I saw a message appear I knew I was ok to go.
1:55 I obviously haven't perfected my run here yet – I know by the end I have a very clear pattern of routes I run. Also this is the beginning of our paranoia about whether messages can spawn on the side areas or not (they can, but they're less common).
2:06 What I end up doing on future runs is running up the right side, then I do the main area, then the left side, but I can tell by how I'm walking that I haven't decided how to do this yet.
2:25 I spot a ghost and wonder whether they're "live" or not. I also have some messages appraised. I mention that this appears to be delayed but I think I was also concerned that meant the messaging system was still loading in. I don't think it was though.
02:33 Yeah I'm cutting across the main area, this is not how I end up doing it in the end, it doesn't feel methodical enough as there's no clear point at which to decide to move across.
02:40 I can hear something on my recording and I have no idea what it could be. It feels like the only obvious thing is washing machine but my washing machine is not this loud haha.
03:03 I try and sweep the camera slowly there to catch the ghost. We're not recording ghosts in this, but I wanted to capture it just because it was interesting I guess, as a bonus bit of observation. Also you can see I kind of went back to complete the right-hand side before moving into the main area.
03:20 I don't hear the screenshot noise for these messages. Maybe I didn't screenshot them?
03:25 First message with an emote. I identify the headpiece. I can't do this for most cosmetics tbh but this is distinctive. I also identify the weapon – it has a high Bleed stat, which is good against the boss in this area (Mohg). Pretty nice observation. "I'll have to identify that later" – I did not haha.
03:55 Ok I'm beginning to develop a strategy for the room, I say I'm gonna do the other side of the room later.
04:28 Laughing at a message. There are a lot of funny messages in the game! It's fun to record.
04:40 Mentioning playing yesterday, so a non-recorded play session, interesting to add that in as extra colour. I think at the time of recording we didn't know how we were going to use this data – I mention 'transcription' at one point for example, but thankfully we're not doing that.
04:55 Love this message. Emoting touching the hand. We saw lots of stuff like this. And it was new, someone getting ready for the DLC.
05:38 Watching this back it's really hard to know if you've checked everywhere, which made it stressful to record but also makes it stressful to watch. I keep thinking "What if there was something behind that thing?" In reality I probably do scan things quickly, and I catch them in a way I don't as a spectator. But also I remember we end up just not able to reach some spots that players left messages in. It's just a factor of the process – much the same as some places are too dangerous/difficult to reach to do archaeological digs in I guess!
05:45 Very funny that I instantly clocked what this message meant watching it a second time, but when I was recording it took me 5-10 seconds to realise. It's a joke about the DLC costing money.
06:05 Ok it's definitely my washing machine. Also a bit of slowdown there in the recording. Ah I notice it in game too and comment on it.
06:41 First of all why did I record this while my washing was ending, and second of all god these messages are gonna take a while to write down from the videos huh.

07:10 I wonder aloud if this is the same player as the one I saw touching the hand. “I’ll have to look at the video” – I went back and they definitely are wearing the same headpiece and it looks like the same dress/robe. But hard to say for sure. Both low number of appraisals too. It would make sense. It’s hard to know how many messages the server has in any one spot, but we know there’s a recency bias too, so it seems plausible.
08:00 And now returning to do the other side, I’ve got my route firmed up now.
08:18 Speculating about whether the game records smashed pots. Interesting. I don’t know actually. But if I quit the game I’d be amazed if it persisted.
08:50 Noting the changes since I last came around. We still know so little about the message selection algorithm.
10:00 So I say my second circuit will be faster because I suspect the messages will be static. I think this is based on the idea that some of the ones I just saw in the centre were ones I’d already seen.
10:08 Speculating about no messages on the lift. I’ll try and remember if that’s true as I continue the review.
10:45 Interesting I don’t even check the message in the corner, as I assume I’ve seen it before.
10:55 One obvious drawback to my routing here is that by only going up the right side and down the left side I potentially miss messages ‘behind’ me – in theory would be good to do the other circuit in reverse, i.e. up the left side, back down the right side.
11:20 Quite a bold pull from me remembering something I saw two days ago! Interesting speculation on the ghosts not being live. It makes sense, but of course there’s no recording of what I saw two days ago.
12:15 I interpreted this message as an indirect joke about politics (“Praise the Right”) but over time I’ve concluded this probably isn’t what was meant, I think it is just a joke about picking one direction over another. I might be wrong, but it seems a bit overly complicated. Also not wanting to say anything that might be transcribed later is really funny.
13:10 Ok I realise *something* about “recording my view” but I can’t see what the issue I thought was, and my fix doesn’t do anything. Very odd. I wonder if I thought I was recording the display versus the window? Either way it doesn’t affect anything.
14:15 Noting that some messages have disappeared. It seems likely that there’s a cap on the number of messages they’ll load in at once, so as we see new ones triggered to load, it unloads older ones. That would be my guess today anyway.
14:25 Oh shit I’ve spotted a message up on a gravestone haha.
14:40 I remember figuring out how to do this was not straightforward.
14:48 Which is of course why people leave messages like this. God I can’t believe I made that jump.
15:00 Brutal.
15:28 I remember hating all this so much.
15:40 Second time, not bad. You can hear how happy I am haha. Platforming in Elden Ring sucks so much, and having to do it to see a message is very stressful. This is one of the few areas we surveyed where you can’t summon Torrent either.
16:00 Definitely a little sloppy there not checking to my right properly.
16:40 Supporting my theory of messages unloading as new ones come in.
17:04 Nice dramatic ending camera angle there, intentionally chosen haha.

Filename: 2024-06-18 23-19-06 (Elleh)

Memo 1: 13/07/25 A2

0:30 Padding time for the messages to load in. Also mentioning how I changed my survey from last time in Elleh. I chose to record the intro/spawn/load screen bit for this video. Not sure why, I think I was afraid of missing stuff, as I didn't do it for the previous video.
00:53 I'm definitely paranoid that I haven't seen many/any messages yet.
1:05 Especially as there are no messages around where you meet Ranni. I think this has clued me into that they may not have loaded.
1:15 Yeah I comment on it. I keep recording because this is just how it's been presented, and it may just be how the site is. We believe there is a bias introduced by where people are leaving messages, but I also think there may be a bias if you've travelled from somewhere else (the mausoleum messages are sort of still loaded in, I think). But now I'm wondering aloud if I should've had some kind of rule for waiting for messages.
1:40 So I've more or less decided to restart the survey here.
2:03 I spot the message through the church door so I know something is here now. Notice how I drew a wider circuit around the church to see if it would force more distant things to load and that might trigger something.
2:17 Explicit call to restart.
2:30 Sure enough, messages where Ranni is.
2:50 I don't comment on the two-handing message, I think I'm suspicious it might be sexual (which it might be!) but I realise now this is a joke about Ranni having four arms, i.e. two pairs of two hands.
3:30 The emotes at the donkey are always so good.
3:40 Ah, feeling conflicted and wanting to appraise them (which is against our ethical code). I totally understand that feeling even now a year later.
4:05 I actually remember A1 explicitly saying later that verticality is a huge issue for the site diagrams. Funny that I comment on it here though. Also I can't believe we didn't do vertical checks last time! It seems so natural now, watching this back, because I know I found so many messages on the top layers.
4:15 I notice a message I can't reach, which makes me wonder how to get there. I don't think I've made the connection to Torrent yet. I'm already talking about starting the second circuit but I know I change this route completely later once I get used to doing the vertical checks.
04:25 "That's the same asset I think" is an interesting observation. I don't know if Elden Ring's world model even works like that. It could be a copy of another part of the church but who knows.
04:43 Rookie mistake, A2.
5:01 Sure, one more go.
5:06 Deciding that must not be the way to get there. Please just use Torrent.
5:30 Ah thank god.
5:37 Torrent turns like a London bus, I remember this being frustrating.
5:51 My washing machine is still running huh.
5:58 You can kind of feel the pressure here because it is like… a good 30-40 seconds to get up here again.
05:59 "Don't transcribe that." Haha.

06:24 I remember thinking at the time that this was a pretty fun thing to do. Like this felt like a game in itself. I think climbers actually do this – like reaching a spot, tagging it on the wall, then challenging others to get there.
6:44 I believe the glowing is due to an item I have equipped that is giving me a beneficial aura. It might be because of my message appraisal though.
6:50 So now I've made the torrent connection I realise I can get elsewhere.
7:00 I mention this here but I thought the message appraisal bonus was a flat heal rather than an over time effect, but I might be wrong.
7:10 "nonono" hahaha amazing. God this was so annoying.
7:22 I'm already discounting the idea of doing a second circuit up here! This is not professional, A2!
7:47 RIP
8:08 It says something about the comfort I feel about this process that I can make an adjustment on the fly like this. Like why not read and record this message.
08:21 I honestly can't believe I managed this. God don't get off the horse.
08:42 One reason I'm trying to resummon Torrent is that I think it might be possible to get up to the roof of the church. I don't think it is, though.
09:02 Important to make the tradeoff of trying vs giving up, because there's no evidence of a message up there so I might be trying to do something impossible, and we also have limitations as players of the game. I'm not a speedrunner or pro player.
9:25 This is my "That was very frustrating" noise. I remember also feeling pressured to keep the videos shorter because all of this is data that has to be analysed later (and potentially transcribed)
10:30 I understand why I tried this because it really does look like Torrent could make that. I don't actually think it's too tall, I think the collision won't let you do it. Because it really looks like Torrent almost makes it.
11:40 Completely wild speculation here. I suspect it's more based on time, honestly. We saw the more distant messages disappear because they were also chronologically the oldest.
12:09 Dramatic pose again haha.

Memo 2: 31/08/25 A1

00:21 It is interesting how we both ended up doing the same kind of intro in which we state the date and time, but this wasn't something we actually planned or co-ordinated beforehand. I also notice straight away that I can hear some background noise in the recording - I think because you comment on hearing the washing machine in your notes it primes me to listen out for it.

00:54 I also did a similar thing of "waiting" for messages to load in, moving through the space in an attempt to make them appear. I also noticed the groaning of the crucified figure in the background which juxtaposes with A2's considered explanation of the survey.

01:05 The washing machine noise in the background combined with the rain sound effects is actually weirdly soothing. Something that is a bit odd for me watching this back is how familiar it feels- after all not only is this a location I surveyed myself, but I've also spent hours watching myself surveying this area, and the avatar is exactly the same. In some ways, they move the same - it's the same character model after all. But, someone else is controlling them, so I'm interested to see where the similarities are and where they end. Another thing- pretty early on in my survey I ended up turning down the in-game music so to hear it so

clearly here along with the narration and the background noise makes for a more intense soundscape than I'm used to.

01:44 A2 makes the point that maybe we should have made a rule that we only start the survey circuits once the first message has loaded in. It's interesting for me to see how there are no messages loading in - often I had the "problem" of old messages persisting, but not of no messages appearing at all.

02:15 A2 gets a "message appraised" message - so I suppose this means they had written a message elsewhere. I don't think I experienced this at any point during the survey.

02:50 Interesting that there is this awkward silence when you get the "two-handed" message referring to Ranni because you think it might be a sexual joke. I felt this kind of awkwardness a lot too in my own survey in which I wasn't sure how to talk about certain things.

03:11 A2 does seem to walk around the church more slowly and thoughtfully than I do- I feel like I was always running around.

03:26 It's really nice to hear A2 laughing at the "horse" joke message directed at the donkey, with a gesture of someone bowing. Again, an example of a site-specific performance!

03:42 There's a really cute example of someone using a "wave" gesture to make it look like they are stroking the donkey. A2 also mentions being tempted to appraise messages. This is actually something that never occurred to me during my survey, I think I just felt completely disconnected from interacting with them in that way.

04:00 I'm really struck by how easy it is for A2 to reach a message higher up in the church in a place that took me ages to be able to reach in my own survey. I just really struggled with any platforming needed to reach messages.

04:48 There is that vicarious tension watching A2 try to reach messages and jumping for them, though because I've read the notes I do have the sense that he did eventually reach at least some of them, which takes out some of that tension.

05:41 It is strangely reassuring to see A2 also struggle to control Torrent when jumping. Also fun to be able to hear the clacking of the controller as he moves.

06:05 It's super interesting to see them reach so high up because I never saw the church from this angle!

06:44 I was wondering what the strange noise was I was hearing and then realised it must be A2's washing machine whirring faster in the background.

07:35 Super interesting to see a message with a gesture at a higher level. And I didn't even know these platform-like areas existed!

10:23 I really feel for A2 with his visceral frustration at trying to reach higher levels, and feel bad because he says he is irresponsible for not trying to get higher, when I failed to see most messages at a higher level in the church when I surveyed.

Filename: 2024-06-20 20-56-30 (Elleh)

Memo 1: 18/07/25 A2

00:00 Looks like I switched back to doing Elleh first, probably because it's chronologically first in the game. "The DLC launches in two hours." Haha I remember that evening, that was so fun. It felt really exciting to survey the game in this way. I normally don't care about 'launch days' for games much any more, especially big ones like Elden Ring, but doing the study really gave me that excitement again.
0:17 "ER24 I guess technically" We never did fix that…
0:50 "We're not going to get… the higher messages this time." Oh I did not remember making that choice. I wonder if I change my mind.
00:51 One issue with note-taking this way is that I've made a claim here ("This message was here before.") which I won't notice/validate when writing down the messages, so I kinda need to go back and check it now. I was right though – it was there before, same number of appraisals. Two days later! They must be cached. Which means my rule of waiting for the first message I see was actually flawed, I needed to go somewhere and clear the cache first and then return to Elleh.
1:10 Oh wow these were all cached. I wish I'd checked.
2:26 LMAO.
2:45 It appears I've already forgotten saying I wouldn't check higher areas haha.
3:22 So embarrassing haha. I think knowing you're recording it makes it so much worse.
3:34 Odd, I even say we're not doing bloodstains, I guess I was just curious. It is fun to see them in fairness.
4:24 Was just thinking the same thing while watching it back. The message is both pointing towards where you get the horse, and is only accessible with the horse, too.
4:59 Oof.
5:12 I wonder if From Software have placed these the exact distance apart you can jump. It's very hard to jump between them, but also not impossible. Seems odd if it's by chance.
5:33 Haha oh man that got me good. That's so funny. You can really see the shift in patience/sloppiness.
6:27 God, the coyote time!
7:18 Interesting to see a message disappear like that. Makes sense (I've triggered a bunch to load) but also now it's lost forever, and that's because of choices I made/skills I didn't have (kinda).
7:26 Also can't read this message any more either (I think a reload would clear it). The breakable object conversation was because of the pots in the Mausoleum I think.
8:02 So something I've noticed is I'm checking for new messages by eye – but of course, a message might have spawned in the exact same place another message was deleted from (or even slightly near it) and I might have missed the message while walking around as it looked like the old one. I really should read each one regardless.

Filename: 2024-06-20 21-06-12 (Mausoleum)

Memo 1: 18/07/25 A2

0:00 I'm writing this after an unbelievably hard week (algorave straight into week at Dagstuhl, I'm on the Eurostar home right now) but I'm finding it quite hard to keep up with the videos sometimes. Seeing them one after another like this (admittedly this is only my second one today) is quite intense when you're not actually doing anything.
0:39 The respawning is obvious in retrospect I guess but still interesting.
1:19 I forgot about this discovery, that's very cool. You even see me smash that pot a few days back in another recording! Haha messaging A1 live on camera.
2:15 "If they despawn, they despawn" I think this makes sense, doing it consciously like this. It's like sampling a nature biome, like a grid sample or whatever it's called. You record what's there when you look, and you hope if you do it enough it approaches statistical significance.
2:29 Haha again, fuck sake.
02:39 Wait now I'm screenshotting each one. This is new. Or is the sound effect just audible now for some reason (because I alt-tabbed to message A1 maybe?)
03:00 I say "yesterday" but it was actually two days ago?
03:32 It really does seem like I've decided to record bloodstains now.
03:38 That's really good.
05:00 Pausing and resuming the recording is interesting. I don't need to declare it either – but I do in case the person watching it is confused or suspicious. The theorising about no messages is also weird but I think we'd not seen any yet and were worried. Of course, checking that you can *compose* a message doesn't guarantee you can post it – but how to check that without violating the ethical code?
06:08 Ok a lot of confusion around bloodstains on my part it seems.
06:57 I think I wait for the emote to reach that last bit so I can get a nicely framed screenshot, even though we won't use the screenshots haha.
07:07 At this point people knew Mesmer was snake-themed.
07:43 Ah am I about to explain this. Ah yes there you go. It's interesting how often this footage puts me in the same headspace as I was when I recorded it, I have the same ideas for clarifications, explanations, etc.
08:30 Wow that's so many more appraisals. God damn.
08:49 A classic.
09:08 Never chased this up. Wonder how it got that high. Streamer? It's so generic.
09:42 Trying to get both angles (below and above) to convey what the emote/message is trying to do.
11:37 I think there were reports that the DLC wasn't working well on Steam Deck or something? I forget what. I know there were issues.
13:47 I think I definitely get a bit sloppy towards the end of some of these runs. Not sure how to feel about that. I don't think I missed anything, but also – how do you know?

Memo 2: 31/08/25 A1

0:00 A2 starts his memo talking about the context in which he's writing it, which prompts me to write that I've also just been through an intense period, though in my case that was doing

two international larps back to back. This has made returning to the Elden Ring work a little tricky as I have to get myself reacquainted with the data and the project again- I find context-shifting really hard.

00:20 There is a strange noise in the background - is that also the washing machine again?

00:57 Discusses caching between saves here, which was something I didn't explicitly discuss but makes a lot of sense.

01:26 I'm initially very confused as A2 runs away from messages that seem to have just spawned in the opposite direction, I think this is because they realise at that moment the Mausoleum has been designated as a non-combat zone for the DLC (at least, after you defeat the boss of course).

01:37 "I'm just going to message A1 about that" - I actually have no memory of getting a message about this so it's very strange to hear in the recording, also feels like I'm included in it in a strange way.

02:39 There are references to activity of previous days whichI'm struggling a bit to put in context given how I'm watching these videos. Also A2 is much more stringent about following a particular path then I am, which I find very interesting. I do have my set routes but I will diverge from them sometimes. Also funny to hear the screenshot sound effect.

03:25 Also interesting to see A2 struggle with reaching messages in the same way that I did! And see a gesture on top of a tombstone!

03:46 There's a really funny bloodstain that A2 records here just outside of the mausoleum. I didn't record any bloodstains here at all so it's interesting to see what they found.

04:21 A2 just stops here and I'm not sure why.

05:04 A2 tries to see if it's possible to leave a message off the main path in the mausoleum- it seems it is possible. It's weird because I didn't see a single message in those areas in all my surveys.

05:55 Interestingly, again A2 seems to stop momentarily and I can hear something (like crinkling?) in the background but I'm not sure what.

07:12 As A2 mentions in his own memo, the reason why a message references a snake is probably a reference to Messmer, which I really like as an indication of how the marketing of the game has influenced people.

08:31 Ah, the infamous fat coinpurse message! I think this is one I also saw, and has a huge amount of appraisals.

09:53 Another really ridiculous gesture as site-specific performance, though in this case it's someone pretending to poo off the side of a cliff. I guess its more inventive than the standard "but hole" joke at least.

10:06 I can only assume that A2 is eating while recording this? Or checking something as he will periodically stop and start again.

10:12 I think I can hear an airplane in the background?

11:33 A2 apologises for being quiet and explains that it's because I have some technical issues with my copy of Elden Ring, so I guess they must be stopping to talk to me about it, so I retroactively feel kind of bad about that!

11:42 The same glitch I saw in my survey is also present here! It's the bit of floating debris. I guess that's just everywhere, huh.

12:31 A2 has stopped and I think I can hear him typing away in the background, presumably to me.

13:05 Watching the ambient player ghosts in the background here has really made me realise how interesting those would be to record as well, and we effectively ignore them in this survey.

Filename: 2024-06-21 21-23-06 (Elleh)

Memo 1: 23/07/25 A2

0:35 I remember I'm pushing outside of Elleh here to intentionally try and trigger message loading – my theory was that it's based on forcing the game to load in new areas, and it may not do that upon spawning at a bonfire as it only has to load in the immediate area around you.
1:40 Note that I reset to the entrance of the church anyway after seeing the first message, so my loops have a consistent start/end.
2:05 Timing the screenshot there so the emote is fully expressed, even though I'm also recording video.
2:40 It's really nice how these classics persist, and how you can also see me as the player enjoying that connection to the people who left these messages. I chuckled again rewatching this at the little guy bowing to the friend.
3:10 SOUND WARNING. I cough loudly. Ouch.
3:25 I don't think I ever reach this message. I wouldn't even know how to. I still don't!
3:45 Oh that knock down theory makes a lot of sense. Although I'd be surprised if it allowed you to leave messages there.
4:40 Hahahaha. Amazing. Live updates from the other survey.
5:25 I think what I was going to check was whether my save file has the item you need to pray for absolution (A1 is using the same save file).
06:00 Sloppy again, not re-reading the messages that were there before!

Filename: 2024-06-21 21-30-00 (Mausoleum)

Memo 1: 23/07/25 A2

2:15 Definitely feels like a DLC message. Very high votes too.
2:30 This NPC reappears elsewhere in the DLC. Worth noting though since we didn't get it on the study, and players without the DLC I think will see her standing there. It could influence messages, so it makes sense to observe. One thing we never learned (or asked) is whether some messages are only shown to players with the DLC.
3:25 Haha I already have a favourite message. I know the one too – the coin purse one.
4:00 Lot of distractions in these recordings, I think I was conversing with A1 as I was doing the survey.
4:25 I think these are diegetic birds singing which makes me realise a) I haven't put bird food out this year and b) there is no birdsong at the moment outside my window.
4:45 I forgot I had recorded that message already.
5:20 You can definitely see blindspots that I'm not checking, it seems less thorough watching it back than it felt to do at the time. I think I also developed a sense of confidence about where players were leaving messages, which, while probably accurate, is not something that should be relied upon.
6:22 Ah ok that's interesting. That's consistent too – I am quite thorough in other areas, so sloppiness here makes sense, and to be fair we found almost no messages here – I think one or two, usually on gravestones.
6:34 More typing. I can also tell you, as a completely unnecessary nerd observation, that I am playing the game on my computer but the sound of me typing there was definitely a Macbook keyboard, not my mechanical keyboard which is much louder. This makes sense as I would need to alt-tab if I was talking on my PC. I probably had Discord open on my laptop which I could easily check and respond on.
7:00 Haha I open the menu even though that absolutely doesn't pause the game.
7:38 That almost sounds like I didn't get the screenshot there.
8:25 I think this is true, still. I think in particular the DLC launch warped how the servers select messages for a few weeks.

Filename: 2024-06-21 21-45-58 (Gravesite Plains)

Memo 1: 23/07/25 A2

0:40 Because we surveyed last night, we know for a fact that messages spawn here, and they actually spawned almost instantly then. So I know that we may want to wait here for messages to appear.
1:00 Lots of DLC emotes of course.
2:25 Very difficult to determine the exact boundaries of a lot of these survey sites.
3:45 In other games taking items might be considered a breach but here the items are local to me – although I'm still not sure why I took it.
4:30 There's a sense of a fashion show here, as players are getting dressed up for their DLC appearances, and the emotes and ghosts and bloodstains fix your outfit in time for others to see.

5:25 I've been playing the DLC for a bit, and we also played last night with A1, so I've changed the world state a bit already.

Filename: 2024-06-21 22-02-21 (Main Gate Cross)

Memo 1: 23/07/25 A2

0:00 These ones are much shorter because the sites are a lot physically smaller. Also as a note, there's another file I recorded just before this where I just eat crisps on the microphone for a couple minutes. Very glad that was not an official survey.
1:21 Did he eat something that killed him?
1:44 I don't think I know that A1 has killed this guy yet.

Filename: 2024-06-21 22-27-19 (Three-Path Cross)

Memo 1: 23/07/25 A2

0:00 I have my helmet off for some reason!
1:15 I don't know if this is a joke referencing the fact that several of these markers are about body parts (heart, blood etc)
1:27 "edge lord" always gets me, god. I forgot about the emote on this one. Incredible work.
2:28 Oh that is interesting. I did not remember doing that but it makes sense. I don't believe the ghosts are realtime but even if they're just "recent" that would be interesting. Don't recall us ever noticing that but.

Memo 1: 31/08/25 A1

0:00 The lack of helmet has actually really thrown me- I think because I never played the avatar like this, and even when I took the helmet off one I don't remember their hair looking this way.

0:42 Love the gesture of pointing towards the Furnace Golem here.

01:14 I feel like I might have also seen this message over the site of Miquella's Cross here? I just checked my own records and it does indeed seem to be exactly the same message!

01:30 A2 laughing at the "edge lord" message is itself quite funny.

02:34 A2 explains that he removed the helmet so that the avatar would be more readily identifiable, as I am surveying at the same time and they wanted to see if I could identify theyghost ambiently in the background. I don't think this ever happened safely. It's quite weird to hear that "I" am surveying at the same time as I watch the footage back.

Filename: 2024-06-22 20-57-52 (Elleh)

Memo 1: 24/07/25 A2

0:18 Not sure what I mean by bonus survey – it might be that we didn't originally plan to do the second day after the DLC. Honestly generally it feels like single circuits has been fine anyway, very rarely do we see a new message appear. I definitely *sound* tired.

Filename: 2024-06-22 21-11-46 (Mausoleum)

Memo 1: 24/07/25 A2

0:35 Really frustrating that we can't read those. I probably should've googled how to do it.
1:20 I'm definitely concerned at this point, watching it back, that messages had not properly loaded in here.
1:46 Ah ok I had the same thought.
2:45 Rationale here I think is that I've already surveyed the cocoon area and it was empty so I should finish this circuit first before resuming to check there.
3:35 Watching it back now I actually have a different conclusion which is that the server has just deprioritised this area because by now everyone is hammering the DLC areas.
4:10 I think it maybe required jumping on the pot without breaking it.

Filename: 2024-06-22 21-17-29 (Gravesite Plains)

Memo 1: 24/07/25 A2

0:20 I guess we hadn't nailed down the exact site list yet? That explains why I have some videos speculatively exploring other areas, and also probably why I described today's run as a bonus.
0:45 Note how most of these have single-digit appraisals – my guess is the ratio of people leaving messages to seeing them is extremely different to the rest of the game right now.
1:32 Still difficult to decide on the edge of this site area, I'm kind of doing it by feel.
1:56 Lining this screenshot up is tricky because of the angles.

Filename: 2024-06-22 21-22-00 (Three Path Cross)

Memo 1: 24/07/25 A2

00:47 Even with the Renna/Ranni meeting point in Elleh, the sexual messages were way higher in the DLC for whatever reason. Probably due to it being close after launch and the high player count.

Filename: 2024-06-22 21-23-24 (Main Gate Cross)

Memo 1: 24/07/25 A2

0:54 I think this might be the same bloodstain that A1 reported seeing at the time.

Memo 1: 31/08/25 A1

0:11 A2 gets out a torch because its dark! I definitely never thought of doing something like this, but its very practical.

0:29 I heard a computer alert sound effect in the background.

0:55 As A2 says in his own memo, I'm pretty sure I saw the same very weird bloodstain ghost. The deer in the background here also adds to the comedic effect somehow.

Filename: 2024-06-30 09-48-38 (Elleh)

Memo 1: 24/07/25 A2

0:14 This trip was to Dagstuhl Seminar 24261 (https://www.dagstuhl.de/en/seminars/seminar-calendar/seminar-details/24261). This has reminded me why I did the second run: I did a bonus run on Day 2 because I knew I'd be away for a week, and that's also why I was so tired, because I'd been prepping to leave and wanted to get my runs done.
2:01 Oh god is that my washing machine again.
2:20 Haha it is. Arrrgh.
3:25 I think I missed that message when I walked over it because it was in the bush.
4:01 Interesting that you can summon Torrent there.

Filename: 2024-06-30 09-55-58 (Mausoleum)

Memo 1: 24/07/25 A2

0:20 Hah I landed on a pot.
0:57 There's such a pressure, once you've identified a message like this that can theoretically be reached, to then go and reach it. Like I have to read this message. There's no alternative.
3:00 I really am curious about the lack of the coinpurse message after the DLC launched. I wonder if there's a mechanism to stop showing messages a short time after they reach 9999 votes.
3:36 I'm a lot quieter today. I think this is partly down to the momentum of the study having a lot of energy to it after the DLC launch, but I'm now back after a long and tiring week of travel.
5:05 Something I've been thinking about watching these back is that my awareness of the game state as a viewer is a lot poorer than my awareness while playing – I'm moving and thinking with total focus, whereas here I don't really know what my intent is and so the

camera moves away from something and I may not have looked there yet, or I may think I've missed something that actually I noticed much earlier. I think it's easy to misjudge the player as a result, watching it back this way, because you assume they are or aren't thinking about certain things. But when you're there in the moment playing it, you have a 1:1 connection between the controller and your thinking about the game state, which lets you act a lot faster.

Filename: 2024-06-30 10-15-54 (Gravesite Plains)

Memo 1: 24/07/25 A2

1:17 This message looks like the same character who left a message back in the tunnel 20 seconds ago – antlers and face mask.
2:27 I remember seeing a lot of bloodstains and ghosts fall down there, even just casually playing.
3:05 I spotted this message from the top of the hill and realised it was new.
4:13 That got me again this time. Great framing.

Memo 1: 31/08/25 A1

02:00 Interesting to see that A2 also sees bloodstain ghosts of people riding Torrent off the cliff here as well.

02:17 Interesting to see A2 just ambiently pick up the Rada Fruit without commenting on it, I don't think I picked up any items specifically? But also we didn't specify whether we would do it one way or the other.

02:51 There seem to be two bloodstain ghosts showing a person with a Fingerprint Stone Shield riding Torrent off a cliff.

03:23 I can see the Fire Golem in the distance so I guess he hadn't killed it yet by this point.

04:13 After being silent for a while A2 laughing at someone riding Torrent off the cliff yet again is great.

Filename: 2024-06-30 10-20-34 (Three Path Cross)

Memo 1: 24/07/25 A2

0:10 I have different policies for this in different locations it seems. Watching back, I think it's good to show the period before messages pop in, as it provides extra context for the survey and setup, and it can reveal things about the process (including mistakes).
2:08 I don't know if I do this on video but there definitely is an item over there.
2:12 This is interesting because the NPC does leave eventually, someone's responding to that (but I don't know that yet).

2:45 edge lord message not here this time.
4:42 So I forget what the item is but there definitely is something over here, I just failed to find it.

Filename: 2024-06-30 10-44-29 (Main Gate Cross)

Memo 1: 24/07/25 A2

0:52 Note that this is being recorded 24 minutes after the previous one.
2:10 Huh this is the same “use item and die” thing I saw at this exact site earlier, but in a different place.

Filename: 2024-07-06 23-01-51 (Elleh)

Memo 1: 24/07/25 A2

0:00 Change of outfit.
0:14 I never completed the DLC, technically.
1:03 This isn’t covered in the ethics code I don’t think.
1:26 The sword is really distracting and I wish I’d put it away.
1:29 Oh thank god.
1:30 Seek Legs might be a reference to the horse?
2:03 These are quite unusual places for messages too, some of them.
2:46 Did I miss the fact there was a hidden message on that pillar? I hope I go back.
2:50 I’ve missed it, damn. What’s interesting is I noticed the message as soon as the first messages loaded in, but out of the corner of my eye, it’s understandable that I missed it at the time but annoying when you can see it watching back a year later.

Filename: 2024-07-06 23-09-04 (Mausoleum)

Memo 1: 24/07/25 A2

0:55 Interesting to hear that I did observe the difference in recording/not recording the intro segments.
2:20 There is a limit to the number of messages you can place, up to 10. And the oldest is automatically deleted when new ones are placed. So this is probably a good explanation for why some messages disappear – like the coinpurse one.
4:01 Ok I wondered where this was because I remembered discovering this but couldn’t remember if it was recorded.

Filename: 2024-07-06 23-23-49 (Gravesite Plains)

Memo 1: 24/07/25 A2

2:12 I think this is warning you of a monster that ambushes you – and there is a distinctive sound cue before it happens.

Filename: 2024-07-06 23-31-01 (Three Path Cross)

Memo 1: 24/07/25 A2

0:54 This also kind of makes sense when you think about it, in that less people are looking at or leaving messages there now as they're progressing further in. Some people obviously will be coming through, but much lower traffic, so I don't think the game is doing checks based on story beats personally.

Filename: 2024-07-06 23-32-57 (Main Gate Cross)

Memo 1: 24/07/25 A2

1:44 Another option for these weird deaths is that they're invasions, of course.

Filename: 2024-07-07 00-59-17 (Divine Gate Front Staircase)

Memo 1: 24/07/25 A2

0:00 I chose to watch this although it's not an official survey as I think it's one of the more interesting bonus surveys I did.
1:12 It's interesting to end here two weeks later, as the players move and their messages move with them, deeper into the DLC.